

National Women's Check-Up Day Fact Sheet



What is National Women's Check-Up Day?

National Women's Check-Up Day is a nationwide effort, coordinated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), to encourage women to visit health care professionals to receive regular, preventative check-ups and screenings for heart disease, diabetes, cancer, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and other conditions. Maintaining regular check-ups is one of five healthy habits that contribute to women's health, along with healthy eating, exercise, not smoking, and following general safety rules.

When is National Women's Check-Up Day?

The fourth annual National Women's Check-Up Day will be held on Monday, May 15, 2006, which is the day after Mother's Day, the start of National Women's Health Week.

Why is it important for women to participate in this effort?

Many of the leading causes of death among women, such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes, can be successfully prevented or treated if the warning signs are caught early enough.

- Heart disease is the number one killer of American women. Often thought of as a man's disease, more women die of heart disease each year than do men.
- Cancer is the second leading cause of death of American women. Lung cancer is the top cancer killer among American women, with an estimated 65,000 deaths in 2002, followed by breast cancer and colorectal cancer.
- Stroke is the number three killer of American women. Each year, 30,000 more women than men have strokes.
- Diabetes is the fifth leading cause of death in women. More than 8.1 million women have been diagnosed.
- HIV and sexually transmitted diseases also have a major effect on women's health. There are an estimated 40,000 new HIV infections each year in the United States, with about 30 percent of reported infections occurring in women.

How can women participate in this important event?

To participate in National Women's Check-Up Day, women should contact their existing health care providers or one of the participating health care providers to schedule check-ups and screening services that day. Screening tests, such as mammograms and Pap smears, can find diseases early, when they are easier to treat. Some women need certain screening tests earlier, or more often, than others. During their check-ups, women should discuss with their health care professionals which of the tests are right for them, when they should have them, and how often.

Women can prepare themselves for their check-ups with "A Checklist for Your Next Check-up," developed by HHS' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, which can be found at <http://www.ahrq.gov/ppip/healthywom.htm>.

Where can women and health care providers get more information about participating in National Women's Check-Up Day and National Women's Health Week?

For information about hosting or participating in this and other National Women's Health Week activities, visit the National Women's Health Week Web site at www.womenshealth.gov/whw or call 1-800-994-WOMAN (9662), or TTY: (888) 220-5446.